

CANADIAN SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION CONGRESS 2007

# CONNECTING LEADERS AND VISION

## Special Congress Open Forum – Thursday July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007

*"I want to thank everyone for participating in the CSBA Congress 2007 Open Forum. The CSBA Board enjoyed hearing your perspective and learned from your suggestions and opinions.*

*Below is just a brief list of what we heard"*

Maureen Kubinec, President, Alberta School Boards Association



Derek Winsor, Eastern School District in Newfoundland, led the Open Forum discussion with a request for suggestions about investments in education proven to have a good return.

'We need inter-provincial coordination regarding the language learning needs of immigrant students, perhaps some kind of national assessment standard.' Unidentified Trustee

'I would like to see more action and best practices on dealing with early leavers from high school.' A trustee from Northern Alberta

'I would like to see the provinces work toward national education standards to enable better citizenship.' A Western trustee

Jenny White from Nova Scotia recommended boards look into the International Baccalaureate Programs as a model that might help developing national standards.

Dr. Morag Pansegrau of Alberta suggested, as part of a larger discussion about the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) scores, that we also need to find ways to measure, for example, citizenship and respect for each other as these values are just as important to us as a society as numeracy and literacy.

Grant Gustafson of Saskatchewan suggested that we should lobby to eliminate the fuel tax that school boards pay – 'this is money that should be spent on education!'

Connie Denesiuk, British Columbia, talked about her pride in the role of school boards and the British Columbia School Trustees Association as co-governors of the education system in BC.

Another trustee offered a number of useful suggestions regarding helping immigrants students by better involving their parents. She advised, for example, that schools and boards provide a forum for parents to share ideas, ask for help, and coordinate their concerns into constructive advice.

Raymond Théberge, the Director General of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) who facilitated the session, thanked the Open Forum participants and expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to listen and learn from trustees and commissioners around Canada.

Lance Bean, the CSBA President (2006-2007), said he was pleased to see so much sharing taking place. "If there is one lesson that we learned today, it is that we are not alone; there is, in this room and in the CSBA, always someone willing to help."

*See you next year! July 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>. Congress 2008 in Regina, Saskatchewan. The province of the Canadian Space Agency, the CLS Synchrotron (they hurl light particles around!), great hockey players and Corner Gas.*

Patricia Parulekar, National Director  
July 27, 2007. Ottawa